





Gregory Cook, Executive Director

Some reflections on 1996 and a look to '97 and beyond:

We had a good year here at the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority, TheRide! We are improving efficiency and pushing TheRide (not literally – our energy-saving and environmentally responsible source of propulsion is clean-burning diesel fuel).

Ridership maintained a healthy volume in 1996 and increased slightly. We made some route changes and time-point adjustments late in the year to better accommodate our riders' needs. Those changes should improve ridership in 1997.

Our Intelligent Transportation System has proceeded well through 1996 and will be unveiled to the community on National Transportation Day, in May. The result will be clear improvements in operational efficiency, but what does it really mean to you? Real-time bus information; onboard digital announcements and electronic visual displays of the next stop, stop requests, and the current time; onboard video surveillance for optimal safety; and more timely transfers.

As of 1996, our fleet consists of 53 low-floor, easily accessible buses – 37 large buses and 16 small. Fourteen new small, low-floor buses are due for delivery by the end of March. Eventually we will have an entire fleet of about 80 low-floor, super-user-friendly, easily accessible buses for all our riders.

As you'll see elsewhere in this report, the 1996 Art Fairs were a high point for us. We look forward to serving the crowds attending the fairs every year, and we pledge to help make July 16-19, 1997 another great community event.

In 1997, we will also be making improvements to the Blake Transit Center in downtown Ann Arbor. As it is upgraded to better serve our customers, the Transit Center will be open for business as usual with as little disruption for waiting passengers as possible.

AATA has a major role to play as the City of Ann Arbor searches for solutions to the downtown parking garage dilemma. We are working on a downtown circulator route that can support increased use of park-and-ride lots and take some of the pressure off of downtown parking facilities as the DDA repairs them.

And you will once again find us shuttling fans from 22 sites on Wolverine football Saturdays. Did you know that we also shuttle folks on Michigan Graduation Day?

Everything we do is dedicated to serving our communities. We constantly strive to do better as we pursue our mission: "...to provide options for efficient and reliable transportation."

For more information about AATA and all our services, please check out our new Web site: <http://theride.org/>. If you have questions for me, you are always welcome to call me at 677-3902 or email gcook@theride.org.



*Average weekday ridership on all
AATA services: 14,618*



*Average weekday ridership of fixed-
route service: 13,599*

Rosemarion A. Blake, Chair, Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority is pleased to publish the 1996 Annual Report.

In August, the Board authorized some major route changes. Many were made to increase the on-time performance on the various routes. The Executive Director, Gregory Cook, and his staff are continually evaluating ridership and routes in order to better serve you, the rider.

We have always had one of the best transportation systems in America. Some five years ago, we started discussing an Intelligent Transportation System, Smart Card, Vehicle Locating System, and other enhancements. This advanced public transportation system will enable us to move into the 21st century as still one of the best systems in the nation. We hope to have the new system operational this year.

Long-time board member Thomas Fegan retired in 1996. He is missed. We hope the very best for him.

In these days of shrinking State and Federal funding, we are vigilant in our fiscal responsibility to continue our ability to serve your needs.

Come ride with us!



The AATA Board of Directors



CHRIS VAUGHN



JIM SAALBERG



ADIELE NWANKWO



LARRY MURPHY



WALTER HILL



COLLEEN MCGEE



*Average miles traveled per bus in
1996: 35,000*

ITS – The Future of Public Transit

The Ann Arbor Transportation Authority has begun its adventure into the world of high technology. With the award of a contract to Rockwell International, TheRide began implementation of an Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) in 1996. Development of the system is funded by a grant from the Federal government to develop a fully integrated system that includes customer information, operator benefits, and vehicle information tracking.

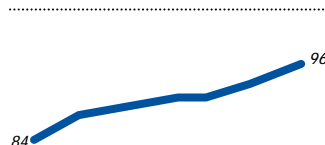
What is ITS?

ITS makes transportation systems more efficient and service-oriented. It offers alternatives to traditional ways of addressing transportation problems and needs. It helps transportation operators by improving transportation system management, increasing system efficiency, and reducing operating costs. And it increases safety, comfort, and convenience, which attracts more riders to public transit.

ART FAIR SHUTTLE RIDERSHIP



ART FAIR TROLLEY RIDERSHIP



ART FAIR SERVICE

AATA operates two shuttles to the Ann Arbor Art Fairs in July: one from Briarwood Mall and the other from Pioneer High School. We also provide a trolley service that transports art lovers from fair to fair in downtown Ann Arbor. In 1996, the Art Fair Shuttle carried 129,642 passengers, and the trolley served another 6,852 people. Total Art Fair Service ridership increased four percent over 1995.

THE FOOTBALL RIDE

Before University of Michigan football fans can cheer the Wolverines on to victory, they confront a tougher challenge: beating the traffic that converges on Michigan Stadium on football Saturdays. AATA is the team the fans rely on. We provide shuttle-bus service to all home games from over 20 Ann Arbor-area hotels and restaurants. In 1996, we served 20,767 Football Riders, over 2,000 more than in 1995.

RIDER INFORMATION

Automated Transit Information

Information operators will have access to schedule and real-time bus route information.

En Route Information

The automatic vehicle location (AVL) system will trigger onboard digital announcements and visual displays that provide next-stop information, stop requests, and the current time inside the bus, and route information outside the bus.

Websites and Kiosks

TheRide's current Web site will be integrated with customer kiosks so riders can access real-time information. The same information can be supplied to local cable television systems.

OPERATIONS ADVANTAGES

Advanced Communications

ITS will minimize voice transmissions by providing digitized data on vehicle status, operating condition, and location. During routine operations, the bus will send this information over a data channel. When a driver requests verbal communication or a dispatcher initiates a voice transmission, the radio will be switched to a voice channel. Minimizing voice transmissions allows more efficient use of limited radio frequencies.

Automatic Vehicle Location

Each bus will determine its location using global positioning satellite (GPS) technology. The system is accurate within one to two meters. If the bus determines that it is running late, the driver will be advised, and, if necessary, the computer will broadcast a message back to the Operation Center.

Vehicle Component Monitoring

Sensors within the engine will continuously monitor vehicle parameters such as engine oil pressure and temperature.

Computer-Aided Dispatching

Rockwell's real-time vehicle operating software will integrate with multimodal software that brings together fixed-route, flexible routing and paratransit scheduling.

SAFETY

Video Surveillance

Onboard safety will be optimized with a three-camera video surveillance system on each bus. The video system is integrated with the onboard computer.

Working with Rockwell, the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority will be installing this integrated system on all vehicles in the coming months. Riders will begin seeing the effects of ITS during National Transportation Week, May 12-16.



Total years of service of all 104 AATA drivers: 1077



Average miles traveled per bus during its first 12 years of service (though AATA buses remain in service for 15 years): 363,000

New Look, New Logo

For over 28 years, the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority has been a safe, efficient, and reliable provider of public transportation. In 1980, a logo was developed to emphasize stability, strength, and a business approach to meeting customers' needs.

This familiar symbol, with its blue and maroon angular stripes, along with the AATA acronym, projected a new image for a new era of public transit, and it has served us well for many years. Nowadays, everyone in the community immediately associates the AATA logo with the reliable, responsive transportation system that supports the quality of life that we have come to expect.

As the new century approaches, AATA is venturing into a new era of technology that will change the current view of public transit forever. In fact, AATA is recognized nationally and internationally as a leader in advanced public transit technology. So we are introducing a new logo and image that better represent our role in the future of transportation.

Our new identity emphasizes TheRide and features new, brighter colors, red and blue, along with clean lines and dynamic circles. You can see our new look now in this annual report. Later this spring, it will appear on our bus fleet. We'll be introducing the new image along with some major technological advances on National Transportation Day, May 12.

So for now, it's "goodbye" to AATA, and "hello" to TheRide, but the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority will continue to be the best and most advanced public transportation service that we can offer our customers and our communities.



1996 Service Highlights

It's no secret that traffic congestion is getting worse. On more and more streets, traffic is reduced to a crawl for longer periods each day.

For AATA, proliferating congestion is both an opportunity and a challenge. On the one hand, more traffic congestion means delayed buses on existing routes. That usually forces us to change routes, which disrupts schedules and commuting routines while increasing our service costs. But the same traffic congestion problems have also encouraged local employers to offer commuting options to their employees by subsidizing their bus passes, and that increases AATA's ridership.

Some of these employer programs continued to grow in 1996. University of Michigan Parking Services expanded its successful employee program to all eligible faculty and staff. In the first year, over 2000 free bus passes were distributed in exchange for a U-M parking permit.

Many downtown Ann Arbor businesses also got onboard the commuting option by offering subsidized bus passes to their employees instead of parking permits. This trend will probably expand as the City of Ann Arbor considers parking-fee increases to solve serious structural problems in the parking system.

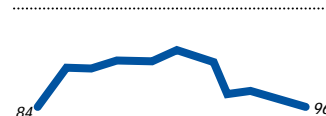
In 1996, AATA reacted to current traffic congestion challenges with the largest service changes in 10 years. Beginning in August, we revised service to 13 routes, introduced a new route (the #22 North/South Connector), and eliminated four routes. Though service changed in many areas, only a few customers were adversely effected. AATA held several public hearings to review the changes with customers and the community, which generated one more set of route revisions in November. Eight weekday changes and four weekend changes were installed – mainly timepoint differences to better serve our riders.

With each change in service, public notices were posted and new schedule books were printed. AATA continues to make every effort to address the needs of our customers when routes and schedules must be modified. We will continue to fine-tune the system using our new technologies, which will give us far more accurate information to make changes that benefit our customers.

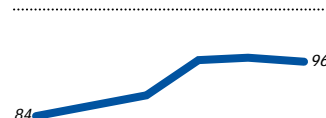


Miles between road calls: 8100

GOOD-AS-GOLD PASSENGERS



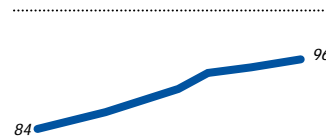
COST PER GOOD-AS-GOLD PASSENGER



GOOD-AS-GOLD

Good-as-Gold is one of the main reasons that many senior citizens choose to retire in Ann Arbor. With a Good-as-Gold card, anyone 65 or older receives free fixed-route bus transportation and shared-ride taxi trips within the City of Ann Arbor for only \$1.50 each way. In 1996, Good-as-Gold served 90,916 passengers. The cost per passenger: \$4.99.

A-RIDE PASSENGERS



COST PER A-RIDE PASSENGER



A-RIDE

In 1996, these services for passengers who cannot use fixed-route buses transported 193,798 passengers. The cost per passenger: for all A-Ride services (AATA and sub-contracted): \$10.16.

Paratransit

In addition to fixed-route buses, the AATA operates paratransit services to meet the special needs of senior citizens and people with disabilities. In 1996, we complied with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 by revising the A-Ride service area and service hours. They are now comparable to the area and hours of our fixed-route bus service. We also began providing paratransit service in the Ypsilanti area for the first time.

To guide AATA's evolution in this new era of Paratransit services, we hired a new Paratransit Coordinator in 1996. Plans for the future include a program that shows A-Ride users how to use the fixed-route service. AATA will continue to strive to make our fixed route service accessible to everyone, including those with disabilities. We hope that improved accessibility and training will encourage more and more individuals with disabilities to use AATA bus service.

During 1997, AATA is planning new programs for cardholders. New Paratransit ID cards will be introduced with AATA's new logo. The green and blue A-Ride card and the Good As Gold card will have a new look. And a new half-fare card will replace the current card that is issued to low-income riders. This new "Fare Deal" card will also be issued to people who are between 60 and 64 years of age.

Paratransit scheduling and service delivery are changing in some new and positive ways. AATA will continue its long tradition of serving Paratransit riders while making sure that the entire community benefits from the improved services.

NIGHT RIDE PASSENGERS



COST PER NIGHT RIDE PASSENGER



NIGHT RIDE

Under contract with Yellow Cab, AATA provides affordable shared-ride taxi service during the overnight hours when AATA's fixed-route buses are not on the road. Night Ride trips at \$2.00 each way per person are available from 11:00 pm to 6:00 am seven days a week. Night Ride served 36,242 passengers in 1996. Cost per passenger: \$5.00.

RIDESHARE

AATA offers a free matching service to help commuters find and join carpools and vanpools. RideShare also helps local businesses solve their employees' transportation problems, which improves their ability to attract and retain the workers they need. In 1996, RideShare handled 205 requests for assistance and helped 114 applicants find alternative transportation.

Fixed Route Service

| | 1996 | 1995 | + / - | % |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------|------|
| PASSENGERS | 3,831,861 | 3,764,329 | 67,532 | 1.8% |
| VEHICLE MILES | 2,468,737 | 2,465,455 | 3,282 | 0.1% |
| SERVICE HOURS | 161,085 | 158,755 | 2,330 | 1.5% |
| PASSENGERS PER SERVICE HOUR | 23.8 | 23.7 | 0.1 | 0.3% |

Passengers, miles, hours are for fixed route only.

PASSENGERS



VEHICLE MILES



PASSENGERS PER SERVICE HOUR



Over 93% of all Ann Arbor households are within one-quarter mile of a bus route.

All AATA Services

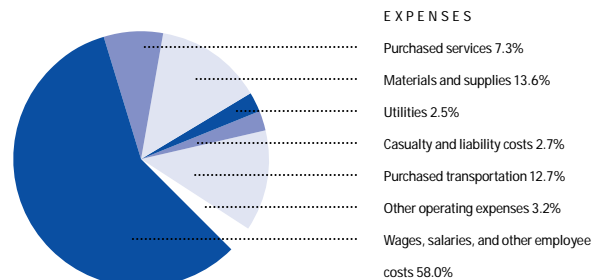
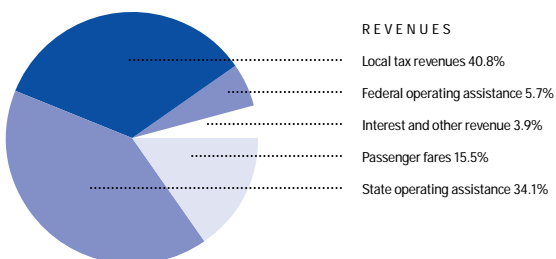
| | 1 9 9 6 | 1 9 9 5 | + / - | % |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------|
| R E V E N U E S | | | | |
| Passenger Fares | \$2,272,881 | \$2,292,156 | (\$19,275) | -0.8% |
| Local Tax Revenues | \$5,979,995 | \$5,730,347 | \$249,648 | 4.4% |
| State Operating Assistance | \$4,987,513 | \$4,646,134 | \$341,379 | 7.3% |
| Federal Operating Assistance | \$837,016 | \$1,206,140 | (\$369,124) | -30.6% |
| Interest and Other Revenues | \$570,418 | \$511,887 | \$58,531 | 11.4% |
| Total Revenues | \$14,647,823 | \$14,386,664 | \$261,159 | 1.8% |

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| E X P E N S E S | | | | |
| Wages, Salaries, and Other Employee Costs | \$8,454,010 | \$7,899,060 | \$554,950 | 7.0% |
| Purchased Services | \$1,062,331 | \$1,103,687 | (\$41,356) | -3.7% |
| Materials and Supplies | \$1,989,039 | \$1,542,322 | \$446,717 | 29.0% |
| Utilities | \$358,766 | \$352,412 | \$6,354 | 1.8% |
| Casualty and Liability Costs | \$391,841 | \$424,006 | (\$32,165) | -7.6% |
| Purchased Transportation | \$1,853,093 | \$1,817,482 | \$35,611 | 2.0% |
| Other Operating Expense | \$468,935 | \$435,202 | \$33,733 | 7.8% |
| Total Expenses | \$14,578,015 | \$13,574,171 | \$1,003,844 | 7.4% |

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| C A P I T A L E X P E N D I T U R E S | | | | |
| Revenue Vehicle Acquisitions | \$1,122,427 | \$3,230,999 | (\$2,108,572) | -65.3% |
| Other Capital Acquisitions | \$2,105,784 | \$191,968 | \$1,913,816 | 996.9% |
| Total | \$3,228,211 | \$3,422,967 | (\$194,756) | -5.7% |

Local tax revenues include City of Ann Arbor taxes and POSA revenue.

Other operating expense includes miscellaneous expenses, interest expenses, leases and rentals, and local depreciation.



Ann Arbor Transportation Authority
2700 South Industrial Highway
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

For friendly, helpful, reliable AATA service,
please call these numbers Monday – Friday
7 am – 8 pm, Saturday and Sunday 8 am – 1 pm
and 2 pm – 6 pm.

Route and Schedule Information
9 9 6 - 0 4 0 0

Business Office
9 7 3 - 6 5 0 0

A-Ride Advance Reservations
9 7 3 - 1 6 1 1

A-Ride Cancellations
9 7 3 - 8 0 2 0

A-Ride Same Day
6 6 3 - 3 8 8 8

T.D.D.
9 7 3 - 6 9 9 7

Fax
9 7 3 - 6 3 3 8

Web Site
<http://theride.org/>



*Total AATA passengers for all AATA
services in 1996: 4,152,817*